



Fast Facts

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

PS10

PREVENTIVE HEALTH CARE FOR THE AGING PROGRAM

Protecting and improving the health of older Californians is a top priority for the Department of Health Services (DHS), which has supported vital programs addressing the health care needs of California's seniors. The Preventive Health Care for the Aging Program (PHCA) is one example of how DHS is working to help seniors maintain and enhance their health.

What is the PHCA?

PHCA is a preventive health care program for seniors age 60 and over that assists clients in managing chronic health conditions, including arthritis, cardiovascular problems, and diabetes, and provides counseling and instruction in disease prevention activities. The program, which serves about 50,000 older adults a year, targets low-income and ethnic minority seniors. To achieve its dual goals of health maintenance and health promotion, PHCA includes:

- Targeted Outreach
- Focused Health Appraisals
- Individual Health Counseling and Instruction
- Group Health Education
- Community Leadership and Advocacy

Each new client provides a comprehensive health history that is reviewed by a nurse and is then given a focused physical and nutritional assessment. In collaboration with the client, the nurse develops an individualized health plan that reflects the client's plan to change identified risk behavior and to undertake appropriate health promotion activities.

Where Can Seniors Access PHCA Services?

PHCA began in three counties in 1975. Today, services are available through contractors in the following health jurisdictions: El Dorado County; Fresno County; Humboldt County; Kings County; Lake County; Madera County; Marin County; Orange County; Placer County; Pomona Health District; San Bernardino County; San Diego County; Santa Barbara County; Stanislaus County; Tulare County; and Yolo County.

Services are typically offered on a regular schedule in community facilities where older adults gather, such as senior and community centers, churches, and senior residential complexes. In these familiar surroundings, the PHCA program conducts weekly or monthly clinics staffed by public health nurses assisted by aides or volunteers. For more information about the PHCA, seniors may contact their local health department.